

A

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, January 10. 1710.

I have, in the humblest Manner possible, address'd this Paper to the present assembled Parliament, in the Case of the late Attack made upon our Establishment and Constitution from the Pulpit—by advancing the absurd and exploded Notions of Passive-Obedience, Non-Resistance, and Hereditary Succession, against the declar'd Principles of Parliamentary Limitation—And in my last I began my humble Application to the *House*, by giving an Abridgment of our Foundation upon which we now stand, and re-capitulating the several Steps taken in Parliament to establish our Liberties, and the Succession of the Crown, as it is now declar'd by both Kingdoms in their respective Parliaments, and afterwards by the Union.

And now, Right Honourable, I presume to go on with my humble Representation, and to lay down what it is, the whole Discourse aims at.

I am far from prompting the Fate of the Person now in your Hands; the Justice of the *House of Commons* needs not, that any Men or Body of Men should move or restrain it; it is of the least Moment imaginable to the Nation in general, what you shall do with him, or how far you shall or shall not push your Resentment; but it is the Crime that waits your Doom—and which the Nation wishes to see receive its Sentence from your Bar—

This is the Prayer of the Petition; this is the present Cure for all this popular Frenzy,

Frenzy, and will do more to establish our Peace, than the whole twenty Years War has done— This will prepare us, either to carry the War on abroad, or to receive Peace, when GOD shall think fit to trust us with that Blessing again. That you would be pleas'd to damn THE PRINCIPLE, it's nothing what ye do with the Man; THE PRINCIPLE is the Plague-Sore that runs upon the Nation, and its Contagion infects our Gentry, infects our Clergy, infects our Politicks, and affects the Loyalty, the Zeal, and the Peace of the whole Island.

Passive-Obedience, Non-Resistance, and the Divine Right of Hereditary Succession, are inconsistent with the Rights of the BRITISH NATION, (not to examine the Rights of Nature) inconsistent with the Constitution of the BRITISH GOVERNMENT, inconsistent with the *Being and Authority* of the BRITISH PARLIAMENT, and inconsistent with the declar'd essential Foundation of the BRITISH MONARCHY.— These abhor'd Notions would destroy the inestimable Privileges of *Britain*, of which the *House of Commons* are the Glorious Conservators; they would subject all our Liberties to the Arbitrary Lust of a single Person, they would expose us to all Kinds of Tyranny, and subvert the very Foundations on which we stand— They would destroy the unquestion'd Sovereignty of our Laws, which for so many Ages, have triumph'd over the Invasions and Usurpations of ambitious Princes; they would denude us of the beautiful Garment of Liberty, and prostitute the Honour of the Nation to the Mechanicism of Slavery— They would divest GOD Almighty of his Praise, in giving his humble Creatures a Right of governing themselves, and charge Heaven with having meanly subjected Mankind to the Crime TYRANNY, which he himself abhors.

'Tis to this Honourable House the whole Nation now looks for Relief, against these Invaders, and honest Men hope, that *now is the Time*, when the illegitimate spurious Birth of these Monsters in Politicks shall be expos'd by your Voice— *Now is the Time*, when you shall declare it Criminal for any

Man to assert, *That the Subjects of Britain are oblig'd to an absolute uncondition'd Obedience to their Princes*— The Contrary being evident by the Claim of Right made in both Kingdoms, when they tendered the Crowns to King *William* and Queen *Mary*; and in the Oath of Government taken by them at the same time, and which no Man by Law can or dare impeach—and indeed ought not to be permitted unpunish'd to reproach.

Now is the Time, when you shall declare it Criminal for any Man to assert, *The Illegality of Resistance on any Pretence whatever*, &c. Or in plain English, *The Right of Self-Defence against Oppression and Violence*, whether National or Personal— The Contrary of which is evident by the Subjects of *Britain*, inviting over the Prince of *Orange* to assert and defend the Liberties of this Island, and to resist the Invasions of Popery and Tyranny, in which he was honourably joyn'd by the Nobility and Commons assembled at *Nottingham*, who took Arms, *Anno 1688*, to resist the Invaders of our Liberties, and were assisted and countenanc'd by the Voices and Persons of the Clergy, the Prelates, and Her Majesty in Person.

Now is the Time, when you shall again declare the Rights of the People of *England*, either in Parliament or in Convention assembled, to limit the Succession of the Crown in Bar of Hereditary Claims, while those Claims are attended with other Circumstances, inconsistent with the publick Safety, and the establish'd Laws of the Land; since her Majesty's Title to the Crown, as now own'd and acknowledg'd by the whole Nation, and the Succession to the Crown, as entail'd by the Acts of Succession in *England*, and the late Union of *Britain*, are built on the Right of Parliament to limit the Crown, and that Right recogniz'd by the Revolution.

It is true, that these Things declare themselves, and are irresistible Evidences to future Ages, of the Sense in which the People and Parliaments of *England* now understand the Stile of their several Laws, and honest Men are fully satisfy'd in the Foundation, on which their Native Privileges are founded. *But it is well known to your Ho-*

Honourable House, to what a Height a subtle and restless Party in this Nation have brought the Delusions of the former Times, how they have endeavour'd to debauch the Principles of the People, and to distil into them Notions of Government and Obedience, destructive not of our establish'd Liberties only, but of the Right of Her present Majesty to the Crown, and of the Protestant Succession in the Illustrious House of *Hannover*.

It is well known to your Honourable House, That notwithstanding the self-evident Testimony of the Rights of the People of *Britain*, as above, there are not wanting Men among us who broach again, and vigorously promote, Both in Printing, Preaching, and Conversation, the said exploded Principles of Passive-Obedience, Non Resistance, and Divine Right, with manifest Design to render odious and contemptible our Legal Establishment, to overthrow the Foundations of our present Government, unravel the Revolution, and invalidate the just Title, which her Majesty derives to these Crowns by the Principle of Parliamentary Limitation.

I need not insist upon it, that these Doctrines strike at the Root of all our Happiness, particularly as they point at lessening the Rights and Authority of the People's Glorious Representative, the *Commons of Britain*— As they undermine and would blow up the solid Claim to, and happy Possession of the Imperial Crown of *Britain* by Her present Majesty, as they promote and encourage the sordid Attempts of a contemptible Pretender to these Crowns, qualify'd by *Popish* and *French* Education to govern us; and above all, as they keep up a Faction, prompt and nourish fatal Divisions, raise Parties, foment Jealousies, and fill us with intestine Confusions.

These Things have receiv'd a just Check by the Resentment your Honourable House has lately express'd at one of the forward Agents of this mischievous Party—and it gives new Life to the Nation's Hopes, that they may at last expect, it shall farther and most effectually be discourag'd by this Step taken to punish the Offender.

But may it please your Honours to consider, WHETHER it would not for ever silence this wicked Party, strike dumb the Opposers of *Britain's* Peace, and blast all the Prospect our Enemies entertain from these Things, of dividing us to our Destruction, if the very Principles, on which these Things are founded, receiv'd their just Sentence from your Breath? WHETHER the Voice of the *Commons of England*, declaring, once for all, the undoubted Rights of the People, of the Crown, and of the Parliament, with Respect to Obedience, Government, and Limitation, would not perfectly silence the Pretences, whether of one Party or another, to passive, uncondition'd Obedience, Non-Resistance, and Divine Right of Succession.

Then we might hope to live at Rest from the perpetual Strife of Parties, and Principles of *Jacobitism* would wither away, for Want of the Vital Moisture they receive from these Notions— Then her Majesty's frequent Exhortations to Peace and Union, which have hitherto been the Jeft and Scorn of this Party, tho' of the last Consequence to the Nation, will come to be effectual, and valued by us— Then we may see a Temper spring up among us of Charity, a Thing almost extinct, and we may cease to be biting and devouring one another for Trifles.

These Doctrines are now unhappily mixt with our Divinity, with our Politicks, with our Loyalty, and with our Charity, and most fatally perplex and debauch them all; but if they are blasted by the Vote of this Honourable Assembly, their Life will be taken away, they will corrode and putrifie in their own Filth, and stink in the Nostrils of those that now espouse them, till, like the dead Carcasses of former Favourites, they will desire to bury them out of their Sight.

May Heaven inspire you all with Love to your Country's Peace, as it has always done with Zeal for her Liberties! May Divine Illuminations clear your Politick Eye-sight from all *Jacobite* Mists and Anti-Revolution Delusions— The *House of Commons* cannot, but by a Judgment from Heaven, be darkned in Judgment, or cool'd in Zeal,